



YEAR IN REVIEW 2024



BRINGING
WATER
TOGETHER

ACWA Navigates Successful 2024

ACWA members should feel a sense of pride looking back at all that the association accomplished in 2024. It was another extraordinary year marked by collaboration, progress and hard work toward benefiting our member agencies and the communities they serve.

For example, we successfully sponsored legislation that further reformed the rate-setting process; secured extensive amendments in the final version of the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulation; and provided strong support for the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program, previously known as Voluntary Agreements, as the best path forward in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta.

Additionally, our team at ACWA East acted as your voice in Washington, D.C. to support infrastructure funding, headwaters health and limit our members' exposure to legal liability for passively receiving PFAS during water and wastewater treatment, among other issues.

In addition to our strong advocacy, ACWA helped members connect with each other through educational events and networking opportunities, including our signature fall and springs conferences, eight regional events and the annual Legislative Symposium and D.C. Conference. We are, and must always remain, united in advancing each other's success in serving communities, farms, and businesses across the entire state.

It has been a privilege leading your association during the past year. I look forward to continuing to work with all of ACWA's members in 2025 to find solutions, answer challenges and build an even stronger association.



Cathy Green
ACWA President



“

I look forward to continuing to work with all of ACWA's members in 2025 to find solutions, answer challenges and build an even stronger association.



2024 ACWA HIGHLIGHTS

ACWA staff continued to engage with members, policymakers, media and other partners to deliver impactful results on behalf of member agencies as the California water industry continues to take a lead role in adapting to a new climate reality.

SOCIAL PRESENCE

    **21,968** SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

TOTAL ENGAGEMENT

8,168

Engagements include likes, comments and shares on posts.

TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

236,070

This is how many times our content was displayed across all social channels.

ADVOCACY

 **280** MEMBERS AND ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATED IN ACWA-LED COALITIONS

 **157**
WATER-RELATED
BILLS TRACKED

 **54**
BILL POSITIONS
TAKEN

 **87**
POSITION & COMMENT
LETTERS SUBMITTED

 **156**
MEMBERS PARTICIPATED
IN OUTREACH PROGRAM

 **376***
MEMBER INTERACTIONS
ON KEY BILLS

**Only interactions submitted to ACWA*

TOP 4
ADVOCACY
ISSUES

- Defence Against Prop. 218 Lawsuits
- Bay-Delta Plan
- A Workable Low-Income Rate Assistance Program
- Water Use Efficiency Regulations

MEDIA PRESENCE

 **22**
NEWS MEDIA
INTERVIEWS

170
MENTIONS
IN NEWS MEDIA

 **10**
NEWS
RELEASES

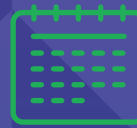
WHO WE ARE

 **472** PUBLIC AGENCY MEMBERS

 **209** ASSOCIATES

 **20** AFFILIATES

EDUCATION

 **6**
SIGNATURE
EVENTS

Spring Conference
& Expo

Legislative Symposium

Fall Conference
& Expo

CLE Webinar Series

D.C. Conference

Executive Edge



7
WEBINARS



8
IN-PERSON REGION EVENTS

MEMBER COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

 **8**
TOOLKITS
DEVELOPED

 **54**
ALERTS & ADVISORIES
DISTRIBUTED

 **105**
MEMBER
MEETINGS



Advocacy Wins

ACWA staff advocated on a number of legislative and regulatory issues in collaboration with ACWA member agencies, policy committees and working groups. On this page and following on the next page are a few highlights of work accomplished during 2024 in **Sacramento** and **Washington, D.C.** on key issues of importance for ACWA member agencies.

WATER RIGHTS

- **Advocacy:** After a sustained effort by an ACWA-led coalition, ACWA removed opposition to AB 460 after significant amendments limited it to increasing penalties for certain violations, including illegal diversions. Without the amendments, the bill would have granted the State Water Resources Control Board new and sweeping authority to prevent diverters from exercising their water rights.
- **Result:** As signed into law, AB 460 will now ensure penalties serve as a deterrent to illegal diversions.

BAY DELTA

- **Advocacy:** For a second consecutive year, the Legislature threatened to pull governor-proposed state funding for the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program, formerly known as the Voluntary Agreements. ACWA supported restoring \$500 million in funding by highlighting how the program represents an unprecedented opportunity to improve California's Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta ecosystem.
- **Result:** \$500 million in funding restored.

LOW-INCOME RATE ASSISTANCE

- **Advocacy:** ACWA agrees there needs to be a low-income rate assistance (LIRA) program for water, but such a program must be workable and efficient. In that light, ACWA suggested amendments while opposing SB 1255, a LIRA bill that raised significant concerns over its proposed implementation and funding source.
- **Result:** The legislation failed to advance out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

GROUNDWATER

- **Advocacy:** ACWA advocated against legislation that would have banned local agencies from permitting some new groundwater wells. The legislation would have created unworkable statewide standards for groundwater well permitting that, in turn, would have resulted in a moratorium on the approval of any new groundwater wells for agricultural or industrial usage throughout much of the state.
- **Result:** The legislation failed to advance out of committee.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Advocacy:** ACWA strongly supported the Water Resources Development Act of 2024, legislation that authorizes water infrastructure projects overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. ACWA efforts included leading a support coalition focused on expanding water supply opportunities at facilities managed by the Army Corps.
- **Result:** Passed by both chambers of the U.S. Congress and signed by President Joe Biden into law.

HEADWATERS HEALTH

- **Advocacy:** ACWA successfully led a coalition in support of the Fix Our Forests Act, reintroduced in 2025, that would encourage active forest management and support community resiliency to wildfires. Related to headwaters health, ACWA also supported the passage of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act, which allows important forest health, water quality, and water infrastructure work to continue.
- **Result:** The Fix Our Forests Act passed the U.S. House of Representatives after being reintroduced in 2025. President Biden signed the Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act into law.

Continued Success in Reforming Rate-Setting Process

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed ACWA-sponsored AB 2257 in September, further reforming the rate-setting process by aiding agencies defending themselves against Proposition 218 lawsuits.

Introduced by Assemblymember Lori Wilson (D-Suisun City), the law enacted through AB 2257 creates an optional public rate-setting process that – if a local agency chooses to implement it – requires litigants to participate and raise specific objections during the process in order to challenge rates or assessments in court. It also limits the administrative record to evidence presented to the agency during the rate-setting process.

ACWA led a broad coalition of over 60 members, consisting of ACWA member agencies and partner organizations, in support of AB 2257. Its success builds upon ACWA-sponsored legislation from 2021 that set a 120-day statute of limitations for challenges to water and sewer rates.

Both laws help provide financial stability for public agencies while supporting transparency and public participation during the rate-setting process.

ACWA Coalition Helped Shape a More Feasible, Cost-Effective Water Use Efficiency Regulation

The State Water Resources Control Board on July 3 adopted the Making Conservation a California Way of Life Regulation intended to achieve long-term water use efficiency with the purpose of adapting to climate change by establishing unique goals for water suppliers in California.

ACWA led several member working groups to review technical aspects of the proposed regulations and worked with its members and coalition partners over the last year to secure extensive amendments that resulted in a more feasible and cost-effective regulation including:

- Changes to timelines for the outdoor water use standard and CII performance measures;
- Inclusion of feasible alternative compliance pathways;
- Modifications to compliance start date;
- Inclusion of 20% of suppliers' irrigable not irrigated area; and
- Changes to processes for requesting variances and temporary provisions and the inclusion of a tree variance.

ACWA's regulatory advocacy started in 2023 when formal rulemaking for the regulation began to



implement AB 1668 and SB 606 (signed into law in 2018). Throughout the process, ACWA, its member agencies and coalition partners advocated for a long-term water use efficiency framework that is feasible and cost-effective and does not impair water agencies' ability to make long-term investments for climate resilience.

In addition, ACWA released multiple resources and toolkits throughout the year to help member agencies maintain clear and frequent communication with customers and the media on the adopted regulation to avoid confusion and the spreading of misinformation.

Deliver high quality member services to support the mission of ACWA's member agencies.



Tools and Resources

ACWA creates several free resources each year to support member agencies as they engage with customers, media, legislators and others. Below are a few of the resources released in 2024 to assist member agencies in educating their communities about local water resiliency investments in infrastructure and the importance of funding to improve aging water infrastructure.

CUSTOMIZABLE TOOLKITS

Provide members with customizable resources including social media posts and graphics, talking points, FAQs and more.



Water Awareness Month

Released tools encouraging water-wise practices and shared information on Making Conservation a California Way of Life Regulation.



National Groundwater Awareness Week

Provided tools to raise the public's awareness of groundwater as a vital resource.



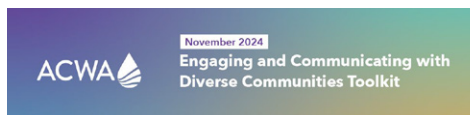
Making Conservation a California Way of Life

Encouraged members to maintain clear and frequent communication with customers and news media during adoption of the regulation by providing multiple resources.



Water Professionals Appreciation Week

Celebrated the important role of water industry professionals and local public water agencies in ensuring safe and reliable water and managing wastewater and recycled water.



Tips for Improvement

Improving the way in which you engage and communicate with the diverse members of your community includes steps such as: reaching out to non-English speakers; being sensitive to language and photos that are potentially culturally sensitive or offensive; and accommodating those who are visually or hearing impaired.

Here are a few tips to start the process.

1. Consider establishing a committee or board to lead the evaluation, planning and implementation processes. This might be an internal group of employees or include members

Diverse Community Engagement

Created tools to help member agencies evaluate the way they engage and communicate with diverse members of their community.



QuenchCA

Provided resources to help member agencies promote ACWA's statewide public education campaign, while amplifying the importance of investing in water infrastructure.

➔ Download these resources for free at www.acwa.com/resources.

FACT SHEETS & POLICY DOCUMENTS

Highlight issues that will impact, or may be of interest to, ACWA member agencies.

Why Invest in Dam Safety?

California can protect public safety and enhance the State's climate resilience by allocating substantial funding for public safety projects at existing dams, including repairs, reinforcements, seismic upgrades and new spillways.

As detailed in "State High Risk," the California State Auditor's updated assessment of high-risk issues faced by the State released in 2020:

"Aging water infrastructure within the State continues to threaten public safety. Specifically, inadequately maintained dams or those not meeting standards, especially those whose failure could affect large populations, pose significant risks to California residents."

Many of these aging facilities present public safety risks and cannot provide their intended water supply benefits because they have been forced to operate at levels significantly below their full design capacities. The impacts of climate change on California's hydrology also will require improvements to existing dams and their associated facilities to ensure that they can provide flood protection benefits now and into the future.

Examples of Dam Safety Projects

1. Anderson Dam Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Order Compliance Project Santa Clara County
Estimated Project Cost: \$475 million
2. Atmospheric River Control (ARC) Spillway at New Bullards Bar Dam Yuba County
Estimated Project Cost: \$9.6 billion
3. Lake Hodge Dam Repair/Rehabilitation San Diego County
Estimated Project Cost: \$275-300 million

January 2024

Making Conservation a California Way of Life Regulation

The State Water Resources Control Board on July 3 adopted the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulation. The regulation implements Assembly Bill 1668 and Senate Bill 606, which were signed into law in 2016, to develop a regulatory framework to achieve long-term water use efficiency with the purpose of adapting to climate change and more intense and frequent droughts in California.

What is included in the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulation?

Under the regulation, urban retail water suppliers must comply with three major components:

- 1. A unique urban water use objective;
- 2. Commercial, industrial and institutional (CII) performance measures; and
- 3. Annual reporting.

Urban Water Use Objective

The urban water use objective is a supplier-specific water budget that is the sum of water use efficiency standards for urban water use for residential indoor water use, residential outdoor water use, CII landscapes with dedicated irrigation meters and supplier system real water loss. These standards are applied to unique local service area characteristics, such as population, climate and landscape area. The urban water use objective also includes adjustments for specified unique water uses, such as evaporative cooling and seasonal tourism, temporary provisions, and on or a basis for portable reuse, if applicable.

Climate Resilience Bond – Water Infrastructure Priorities

Adapting to climate change requires California to urgently and significantly rehabilitate and modify existing water facilities, improve operational flexibility, and make generational investments in new water infrastructure. The State is currently underfunded to manage a water system with a decreasing broomstick, less frequent precipitation, and increasing extreme weather. Additional above- and below-ground storage capacity must be developed to capture precipitation. In addition, new and enhanced conveyance facilities are essential for moving collected and stored water, connecting suppliers with different supply sources, transferring water among water users, and recharging groundwater for much beneficial purposes. State investment in water infrastructure is crucial to providing the reliable delivery of safe water to California residents, businesses, and agriculture. In addition, climate resilience projects have also been shown to stimulate local economies and create jobs.

Recycling and Desalination (\$1.35 billion)

The State has set a target of 1.8 million acre-feet of new recycled water by the year 2040. In order to meet this goal the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) estimates that the cost to State, local, and federal agencies will total approximately \$27 billion. In addition, the State has set a target of expanding brackish groundwater desalination by 84,000 acre-feet per year by 2040. Both ocean and brackish groundwater and surface water desalination play an important role in local communities' water supply planning process to enhance California's drought resilience.

Flood Protection (\$1 billion)

Levees, weirs, bypasses, and other flood protection facilities reduce the risk of major flooding. Projects that repair, expand, or replace these facilities are essential to flood management and public safety. As recent atmospheric rivers have shown, California must invest significant resources in flood protection including new infrastructure to capture flood flows and divert them to groundwater recharge facilities.

Dam Safety/Reservoir Operations (\$850 million)

In 2022, 112 California dams were rated "less than satisfactory" by State dam inspectors, resulting in many of the reservoirs being filled under full storage capacity. Dam safety projects would help protect public safety and increase storage capacity. In addition, Fremont Inland Reservoir Operations (FPRO) increase the efficiency of water infrastructure through the use of data from watershed monitoring and weather forecasting to optimize water releases from reservoirs.

ACWA UPDATE ON PRIORITY ISSUES

A high-level look at recent ACWA activity and initiatives.

OCTOBER 2024

Proposition 218 Legislation

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed ACWA-sponsored AB 2257, authored by Assemblymember Lori Wilson (D-Suisun City), into law on Sept. 25. This bill aids member agencies in defending against Proposition 218 lawsuits by requiring litigants to have participated and raised specific objections during the bill's public administrative process. ACWA led a large coalition in support of the bill, building on the success of ACWA-sponsored SB 323 (Caldwell, 2021), which created a 120-day statute of limitations for filing lawsuits against water and sewer rates through the Proposition 218 process.

Discontinuation of Residential Water Service for Nonpayment

The governor signed ACWA-sponsored AB 2599, authored by the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee, into law on Sept. 22. The bill incorporates agreed-upon amendments to SB 3 (Dodd, 2023), which made various changes to the Water Shutoff Protection Act, including granting the California Attorney General a restitution authority. AB 2599 provides that this new authority does not cover personal property – as water systems do not have the authority to obtain personal property from their customers – and applies where there "has been unlawful conduct" as opposed to where there "may have been unlawful conduct" under the Act.

Water Rights

The governor signed AB 640, authored by Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D-Orinda), into law on Sept. 22. ACWA removed opposition to the bill after significant amendments limited the bill to increasing penalties for certain violations, including illegal diversions. These amendments represented an extraordinary improvement to the bill, which previously would have granted the State Water Resources Control Board new and sweeping authority to prevent

MONTHLY REGULATORY ROUNDUP

FEBRUARY 2025

UPCOMING ACWA EVENTS

ACWA will host its 2025 Conference February 25-27 in Washington DC. Space is limited - register [here](#) to attend.

QUARTERLY POLICY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

ACWA's next Quarterly Policy Committee Meetings will be held virtually on March 13 from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Register [here](#) to attend any or all of the meetings. The schedule includes:

Time	Topic
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	ACWA Updates and Committee Orientation
9:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Water Management Committee
11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Groundwater Committee
12:45 PM - 2:00 PM	Water Quality Committee
2:15 PM - 3:30 PM	Agriculture Committee
3:45 PM - 5:00 PM	Energy Committee

POLICY UPDATES

FEDERAL

ACWA's Federal Regulatory Issues Chart is accessible [here](#).

WATER MANAGEMENT

Revised Bay-Delta Plan Update
On January 16, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) released a [proposal](#) for the draft Sacramento/Delta updates to the Bay-Delta Plan. Check out CDFW's proposal provides alternative language to the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board) Alternative 1a for protecting flows that are part of the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program.

California Endangered Species Act: Western Herring Owl
On November 14, CDFW requested [data and public comments](#) as part of

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION 2024

2024 Summary of Legislation

ACWA

OUR WORK RESOURCES EVENTS NEWSROOM

RESOURCES

All Categories All Topics All Documents Apply

FEB 5, 2025 MEMBER TOOLS

PRIORITY ISSUES BULLETIN

With strong direction from ACWA's Board of Directors and active member involvement through ACWA's policy committees, task forces and regions, [...] [READ MORE](#)

FEB 4, 2025 COMMENT LETTERS

COMMENT LETTER: BIOENERGY FEED-IN-TARIFF PROGRAM

To: The Honorable Alize Reynolds, President, The Honorable John Reynolds, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission
Subject: Need to Extend the Bioenergy Feed-in [...] [READ MORE](#)

FEB 3, 2025 COMMENT LETTERS

DRAFT SACRAMENTO/DELTA BAY-DELTA PLAN UPDATES

To: Ms. Honorable Alize Reynolds, PHG Program, Pesticide and Environmental Toxicology Branch, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, California Environmental Protection Agency [...] [READ MORE](#)

FEB 3, 2025 FACT SHEETS

WILDFIRES AND WATER: THE ROLE OF CALIFORNIA PUBLIC WATER AGENCIES

California faces catastrophic climate-driven wildfires, exacerbated by periods of heavy rainfall followed by periods of extreme drought, decades of fire [...] [READ MORE](#)

JAN 30, 2025 COMMENT LETTERS

COMMENT LETTER: SACRAMENTO/DELTA BAY-DELTA PLAN UPDATES

To: Ms. Honorable Alize Reynolds, PHG Program, Pesticide and Environmental Toxicology Branch, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, California Environmental Protection Agency [...] [READ MORE](#)

JAN 17, 2025 COMMENT LETTERS

COMMENT LETTER: PROPOSED PUBLIC HEALTH GOAL FOR NOMA

To: Ms. Honorable Alize Reynolds, PHG Program, Pesticide and Environmental Toxicology Branch, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, California Environmental Protection Agency [...] [READ MORE](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO NEWS

Receive ACWA's weekly curated water news.

[SIGN UP](#)

QuenchCA

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE MATTERS

SUMMARY OF APPELLATE CASES

DECIDED BY THE COURTS IN 2023 - 2024

2024 Summary of Appellate Cases

ACWA



ACWA Events

With events spanning the entire state, ACWA created opportunities for members to connect and engage in 2024, highlighted by its two major conferences and numerous region events.

The ACWA Spring Conference & Expo in Sacramento and the ACWA Fall Conference & Expo in Palm Desert hosted over 1,600 attendees each. Presentations and panels at both conferences covered important water issues including groundwater management, Bay-Delta policies, data and artificial intelligence, and water use efficiency. Attendees at the Spring Conference also heard from Gov. Gavin Newsom during a special appearance.

ACWA opened the year with annual events such as its ACWA D.C. Conference, where 145 people gathered to discuss and advocate for California water priorities in the nation's capital. Meanwhile, ACWA's Legislative Symposium attracted about 150 people to Sacramento to hear about SGMA implementation, water use efficiency and to hear from state Sen. Angelique Ashby on a variety of issues, including budget deficit impacts on water issues at the Capitol.

Some additional highlights included:

- The association's first leadership development program, **Executive Edge**
- A two-part webinar on the **Making Conservation a California Way of Life Regulation** held in partnership with CalWEP and League of California Cities
- A live **"ACWA 101"** webinar providing an overview of how the association partners and shares resources with members

- A three-part **CLE Virtual Workshop Series** in September and October offered continuing legal education credit on topics including the roles and responsibilities of a general counsel and easements

ACWA experienced a phenomenal year with eight in-person ACWA region events:

- Region 2 hosted a program that highlighted the **resilience and revival of the town of Paradise in the wake of the 2018 Camp Fire**
- Region 3 and Region 4 hosted a program and tour on **watershed resilience**
- Region 9 hosted a program titled **"Building the Future: Water Workforce Development Solutions"**
- Region 8 hosted a program titled **"Leadership in Times of Climate Uncertainty"**
- Region 5 hosted a program and tour that **explored water management and agricultural resilience in the Pajaro Valley**
- Region 10 hosted a program titled **"Addressing Water Quality Challenges: Present and Future"**
- Region 6 and Region 7 hosted the annual **San Joaquin Valley Water Forum**
- Region 1 hosted a program and tour of Marin Water's critical infrastructure titled **"Mt. Tamalpais Watershed Adventure: Explore, Connect, and Learn"**



Strength Through Partnerships

ACWA frequently partners with other groups and associations to strengthen state and federal advocacy education efforts and communications. Some of the partnerships are solidified into standing coalitions on issues of common interest, while others are created for a single issue. To the right are some of the many agencies ACWA partnered with in 2024 to strengthen advocacy, education or communication efforts.



Awards

ACWA recognizes its members' achievements throughout the year by showcasing their outstanding efforts and dedication to advancing the California water industry.

➔ [Learn more at www.acwa.com/awards](http://www.acwa.com/awards)

Excellence in Water Leadership
Recognizing individuals who have made a remarkable and visible contribution to California water.

Andy Fecko
General Manager
Placer County Water Agency

SPONSOR BLACK & VEATCH





Clair A. Hill
Recognizing exemplary programs developed by ACWA member agencies.

East Valley Water District's Sterling Natural Resource Center

SPONSOR **Jacobs**

John P. Fraser Emissary Award
Recognizing remarkable contributions to California water through voluntary service to ACWA.

Charles Gibson
Santa Margarita Water District
Board Director





Excellence in Innovation Award
Recognizing innovations by member agencies that continue to move the water industry forward.

Jurupa Community Services District's Heli-Hydrant Project

SPONSOR **CDM Smith**
cdmsmith.com



Excellence in Communication Award
Recognizing outstanding achievements by public water agencies in communicating with customers, legislators, media, the public and others.

Contra Costa Water District's MadeWithCCWD Campaign



Outreach Awards
Recognizing the most active ACWA member agencies in each region, as well as an overall winner, through the Outreach Awards Program.

Overall winner: Three Valleys Municipal Water District

Invest in California's water future by providing opportunities through education, information and professional development for ACWA members, staff, community leaders and the public.



QuenchCA Campaign Continued Statewide Education About Infrastructure

ACWA's statewide public education campaign, Quench California, wrapped up its third year with continued awareness among Californians about the importance and positive benefits of investing in water infrastructure.

The award-winning QuenchCA campaign was deemed a success during its three-year run. The website attracted more than 56,000 pageviews and the digital ads generated over 31 million impressions.

There were two toolkits in 2024 that provided member agencies and other industry partners with attractive social media graphics and recommended language for social media posts. The updated toolkits supplemented previously shared videos, customizable newsletter articles, infographic and flyer for members to utilize in communicating with customers.

The campaign also continued its digital advertising partnership opportunity for member agencies. Under the partnership, campaign consultants developed customized digital ads that met the members' goals and a strategy for most effective placement within the agency's service area. Members paid only for the ad placement.

ACWA's Board of Directors allocated funding in the 2025 budget to start work on a new public education campaign to launch in 2026.



DIGITAL ADVERTISING IMPRESSIONS

31+ MILLION



QUENCHCA WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

56,000+



UNIQUE DOWNLOADS OF TOOLKIT ITEMS

500+



ACWA Launches Executive Edge Event for Water Agency Leaders

In 2024, ACWA debuted a new professional development event called **Executive Edge**. The two-day event was an opportunity for general managers and other executive-level water agency staff to hone advanced leadership skills and learn about strategies curated to propel their careers to new heights. Approximately 70 people attended the inaugural event in Petaluma.

The training was facilitated by Dr. Steve Swafford, IOM, who has more than 30 years of experience in strategy, leadership development, communication and governance.

LEADERSHIP FORUM
executive EDGE



ACWA Foundation Celebrates Milestones

In its second year of operation, the ACWA Foundation grew the size of its Board of Trustees, hired an Executive Director, built new partnerships and further defined how it can be of most value to the water industry.

The ACWA Foundation's Board of Trustees in December named Lisa Mealoy as its first Executive Director. Mealoy, President of Strategic Resources Advisors, Inc., will build partnerships with academia, businesses, water agencies, and other organizations to develop an inclusive and skilled workforce that reflects California's diversity.

The Foundation also created the Bette Boatmun Emerging Leader Award in honor of the late former

ACWA President and supporter of the Foundation. The new award will honor Boatmun's passion for supporting up-and-coming leaders by financially assisting applicants in attending a leadership training program.

The nonprofit 501(c)3 was formed by the ACWA Board of Directors in 2022 to provide a nonprofit, tax-exempt structure to solicit funds to educate, mentor and invest in the next generation of water leaders.

The ACWA Foundation and its Board of Trustees operate separately and independently from ACWA and its Board of Directors.

➤ For more information about the foundation, visit www.acwa-foundation.org.



ACWA FOUNDATION

Scholarships

ACWA supports and encourages future water leaders through its scholarship program. In 2024, \$31,000 in scholarships and a fellowship was awarded to exceptional students. ACWA administers the Edward G. "Jerry" Gladbach scholarship on behalf of SCV Water and the Arthur L. Littleworth BBK Diversity scholarship on behalf of BBK. The Clair A. Hill scholarship is sponsored by Jacobs and Dublin San Ramon Water District contributes to the ACWA Scholarships.

➤ Learn more at www.acwa.com/scholarships



ACWA SCHOLARSHIP
(\$3,500)

Brayden Smith

Environmental Studies Student
San Jose State University



CLAIR A. HILL SCHOLARSHIP
(\$5,000)

Josephine Wrinkle

Marine Biologist Student
California State University, Monterey Bay



**EDWARD G. "JERRY" GLADBACH
SCHOLARSHIP**
(\$2,500)

Krisha Pedraza

Environmental Studies Student
California State University, San Marcos



**ARTHUR L. LITTLEWORTH BBK DIVERSITY
SCHOLARSHIP**
(\$10,000 over four years)

Emmie Fiel

Civil Engineering Student
Santa Clara University



**STEPHEN K. HALL WATER LAW & POLICY
SCHOLARSHIP**
(\$10,000)

Jennifer Loveland-Rose

Law Student
Northeastern University School of Law



**JOHN P. FRASER WATER LEADERS
FELLOWSHIP**
(up to \$5,250)

Laura Gallegos

Senior Public Affairs Specialist
SCV Water

Foster a collaborative and mutually respectful culture to ensure a positive experience for ACWA members and staff and continually invest in the financial health and organizational well-being of the association.



New Strategic Plan Developed and Approved

After nearly a year of collaborative effort, the ACWA Board of Directors approved a new 2025-'29 Strategic Plan aimed at strengthening the association's influence in California water policy.

Adopted in September 2024, the comprehensive plan includes 50 key performance indicators tied to four primary goals: advocacy, connections, education and organizational effectiveness. It was crafted by a task force led by ACWA Vice President Ernie Avila and representing all 10 of ACWA's regions, ensuring diverse perspectives from across California's varied water landscape.

The plan is designed to make ACWA more effective in shaping water policies that reflect the needs and priorities of its member agencies, particularly as the state faces increasing water management challenges.

It also places a strong emphasis on networking and education, fostering stronger connections and knowledge-sharing among member agencies.

By investing in these areas, ACWA aims to create a more unified and informed membership base. Additionally, the focus on organizational effectiveness will ensure that ACWA remains agile and responsive to its members' evolving needs.

With this strategic plan, ACWA is poised to lead with greater clarity and impact, providing its members with the tools and support needed to navigate California's complex water issues. Members can expect more streamlined advocacy efforts, increased collaboration opportunities and a stronger voice in state and federal water policy discussions.

Financial Highlights

In 2024, ACWA took additional steps to strengthen the long-term financial health of the organization. Based on the recommendations and guidance of the association's Finance Committee and the leadership of its Board of Directors, ACWA:

- Continued additional quarterly payments to CalPERS to help address unfunded liability and adopted a 15-year amortization schedule to pay off unfunded pension liability.
- Received a clean opinion with minimal adjustments on the annual financial audit.
- Generated more than \$149,000 in spring conference sponsorships and \$125,000 in fall conference sponsorships, representing significant year-to-year gains.
- Generated about \$70,000 in non-dues revenue through ACWA's Preferred Provider program.



- **Dues**
\$8,945,756 (71%)
- **Conference / Seminars**
\$2,852,210 (22%)
- **Other**
\$860,938 (7%)



- **Salaries / Benefits**
\$7,529,537 (65%)
- **Admin / General**
\$1,799,133 (15%)
- **Events**
\$1,585,291 (14%)
- **Depreciation**
\$221,741 (2%)
- **Professional Fees**
\$444,785 (4%)

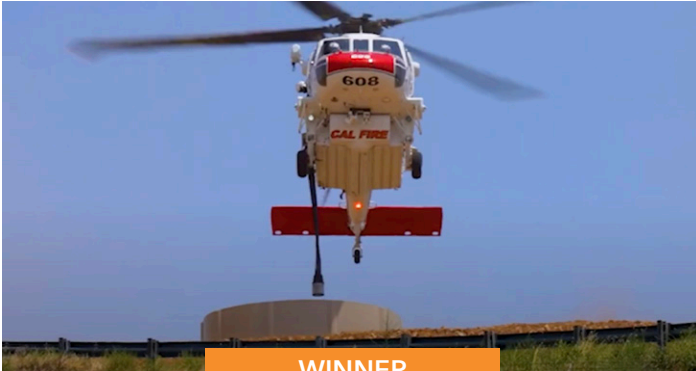
6 New Public Member Agencies

- Bear Valley Water District (Region 3)
- Biggs-West Gridley Water District (Region 2)
- City of Camarillo (Region 8)
- City of Petaluma (Region 1)
- Kern Water Bank GSA (Region 7)
- Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin Western Management Area GSA (Region 5)



Excellence in Innovation Award

In its third year, the ACWA Excellence in Innovation Award highlighted successful innovations by member agencies that continue to support and drive California toward long-term water resilience. Four Innovation Award finalists participated in a panel discussion at ACWA's 2024 Fall Conference & Expo in Palm Desert. The four 2024 finalists were:



WINNER

Jurupa Community Services District for its Heli-Hydrant Project, designed to rapidly supply large volumes of water for aerial firefighting efforts.



Rancho California Water District for its Well Depth Monitoring System that provides a comprehensive, automated solution that enhances the accuracy and reliability of groundwater monitoring.



San Geronio Pass Water Agency for its Gap Funding Program that provides short-term funding to bring upgrades to disadvantaged communities.



Western Water for its North Well Manganese Treatment Project that was implemented to reduce the manganese concentration and enable continued delivery of clean, high-quality local water.

Membership Appreciation Month

In August 2024, ACWA proudly celebrated its 12th annual Membership Appreciation Month honoring the dedication and contributions of our members. Membership Appreciation Month offers ACWA staff and leadership an opportunity to express gratitude to our members for all the work they do on behalf of the association.

The celebration consisted of an engaging social media campaign that included weekly prizes for ACWA members who participated, a special letter to members from ACWA leadership, personalized thank you e-cards sent from staff to members, a photo collage in the August edition of "ACWA News," a special ACWA 101 Webinar, and multiple videos both highlighting the work of ACWA members and thanking them from ACWA leadership.



Take Advantage of Member Resources

ACWA ALERTS & ADVISORIES

www.acwa.com/alerts-advisories

Receive timely updates on legislative, regulatory and communications related topics.

ACWA TOOLKITS

www.acwa.com/resources

Toolkits are produced throughout the year to help member agencies educate and inform stakeholders about high-priority water issues.

ACWA ENEWS

www.acwa.com/subscribe-to-eneews

Weekly e-newsletter that highlights water news and upcoming events.

ACWA NEWS

www.acwa.com/newsroom

Monthly newsletter with water industry and member agency news and features.

EVENTS

www.acwa.com/events

Share and view upcoming water industry related events.

INNOVATION

www.acwa.com/innovation

See examples of exceptional work being done by ACWA members that drive the water industry forward.

WEBINARS

www.acwa.com/resources

Purchase ACWA webinars, recorded conference sessions and printed publications.

OTHER RESOURCES

www.acwa.com

Summary of Legislation, Summary of Appellate Cases, Monthly Priority Issues Update, Federal Regulatory Issues chart, Regulatory Roundup and more.

2024 - '25 ACWA Board Of Directors

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ACWA VISION

ACWA envisions a California that values and invests in water as an essential and plentiful resource that is managed efficiently and sustainably from headwaters to the ocean to meet all of California's present and future needs.

ACWA MISSION

ACWA provides comprehensive leadership, advocacy and education to serve California public water agencies' infrastructure and other water management needs to ensure high quality, sustainable and reliable water supplies in an environmentally, socially and fiscally responsible manner.

ACWA VALUES

- Essential Public Service
- Community
- Culture
- Collaboration
- Resource Stewardship
- Integrity
- Solutions